

Lesson 7



The Baptism with the Holy Spirit

A rocket stands on the launching pad. It has plenty of fuel and plenty of liquid oxygen, but it's not going anywhere. It just stands there idle. The church was like the lifeless rocket when Jesus returned to heaven. Christ told His followers to go into all the world and preach the gospel. It seemed like an impossible mission for 120 people. There was something lacking.



So the rocket stands cold and still until something significant happens. Once a spark of fire ignites the fuel, the rocket suddenly zooms toward outer space. In a similar manner, the church needed a spark of fire that would set it spiritually ablaze for God. Instead of being people who hid as cowards behind closed doors as they did after Christ's crucifixion, the disciples suddenly became powerful and bold in their witness for Jesus! John the Baptist prophesied this as recorded in Matthew 3:11, "Jesus will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and fire**." When the fullness of the Holy Spirit came upon those waiting in Jerusalem, the spark ignited the rocket. The world would never be the same, and the church entered a new dimension of knowing the fullness of God.

Overview

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is one of the greatest experiences available to believers. The purpose of this experience is to empower Christ's followers to do the work of God.

Some well-meaning Christians have attempted to convince us that the Spirit-filled power of God, accompanied by the initial evidence of speaking in tongues, was only for the early church. It was on the Jewish feast of Passover that the fullness of the Holy Spirit was given to the church (Acts 2:2-4). In his sermon following the great outpouring, Peter referred to the

generation of his day when he said, "The promise is unto you." Then, he specifically included the next generation when he said, "and to your children." He saw visions of distant lands and times and declared "and to all that are afar off." He does not conclude here. Peter includes you by adding, "even as many as the Lord shall call." (Acts 38-39)

This lesson will focus in on what the baptism with the Holy Spirit is and is not, and why speaking in tongues is the initial sign of this wonderful, empowering experience.

DECLARATION OF FAITH

"We believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the incoming of the promised Comforter in mighty and glorious fullness to endue the believer with power from on high; to glorify and exalt the Lord Jesus; to give inspired utterance in witnessing of Him; to foster the spirit of prayer, holiness, sobriety; to equip the individual and the church for practical, efficient, joyous, spirit-filled soul-winning in the fields of life: and that this being still the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, the believer may have every reason to expect His incoming to be after the same manner as that in which He came upon Jew and Gentile

a rded in the Word, that it may be truly said of us as of the house of
C on them as on us at the beginning.

– Aimee Semple McPherson,
Founder ICFG



Jesus Christ, the baptizer with the Holy Spirit, is the second of the four main doctrines of the Foursquare Church. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is extremely important to the spiritual life and service of every believer. It is the secret of the Church's power. Only through the power of God's Spirit can we be assured of ultimate success in winning people to Jesus.

WHAT THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IS AND IS NOT

It is not the same as the new birth when a person is saved. It is not a reward for years of faithful service, nor is it the zenith of the Christian experience. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is power imparted by God to equip the believer to do God-given tasks (Acts 1:8). It is a free gift (John 14:16; Acts 2:38). It is an experience subsequent to salvation. Here are some examples:

- (1) The apostles were converted under the ministry of Jesus (Luke 10:20; John 13:10-11; 15:13). They were filled with the Holy Spirit two years later (Luke 24:49; Acts 2:1-4).
- (2) The Samaritans were saved under the ministry of Philip (Acts 8:5-12). They were baptized with the Holy Spirit under the ministry of Peter and John some days later (Acts 8:14-17).
- (3) Paul was converted on the road to Damascus after receiving a personal vision of the resurrected Christ (Acts 9:3-9). He was baptized with the Holy Spirit under the ministry of Ananias three days later (Acts 9:17-19).

THE INITIAL EVIDENCE

While the ongoing evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is the power to witness, the initial evidence is the speaking in unknown tongues (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6). It is true that three other accounts in Acts say nothing about tongues, but the omission is due to the briefness of those records. In the one case, it seems that it was a refilling not the initial baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31). In the other two cases, it is strongly implied that they did speak with tongues.

In Acts 8:14-19, there was some supernatural sign that was so obvious that Simon was willing to pay money to have that power. It was not the working of miracles; that had already occurred previously under the ministry of Philip (Acts 8:5-7). What Simon was attempting to buy was something else that supernaturally occurred when people were baptized with the Holy Spirit, probably the speaking in tongues. Then, when Saul of Tarsus was baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17), the Bible does not say specifically that he spoke with other tongues. However, he testified later in 1 Corinthians 14:18 that he spoke with tongues more than anyone else.

Jesus predicted that His followers would enjoy the benefit of speaking with tongues (Mark 16:17). The gift of tongues is primarily a devotional gift meant for the personal edification of the individual Christian (1 Corinthians 14:4).



The believer develops his/her most intimate intercession with God under the direct anointing of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 14:21 the Apostle Paul quotes Isaiah 28:11-12 which suggests that speaking with tongues is for the personal spiritual refreshment of the believer.

Why is speaking in tongues the initial evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit? (If you need more room use the back of this sheet of paper.)



To be filled with the Holy Spirit:

- There must be a genuine desire for more of God (John 7:37-39).
- There must be full commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Since a person is seeking power for service, it is logical that he must be willing to serve the Lord. There must be a surrendering to God's will in order for the Holy Spirit to have His way.
- There must be vital personal faith. Like salvation, the baptism with the

Holy Spirit is a wonderful gift that is received by faith. In Acts 8:20, Peter refers to the fullness of the Holy Spirit as being free, not something we can earn or buy. Acts 10:46-47 talks about the *GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*. We also need to have faith that the promise is for us today (Acts 2:38-39). Our faith needs to be manifested in praise and thanksgiving. Consistently the fullness of the Spirit comes when we are praising the Lord. After all, one of the main ministries of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus (John 16:14). It is also a faith that will persevere **until** the promise is received (Luke 11:5-13).

One of the great blessings of being saved is that we become eligible to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Peter declares in Acts 2:38 – *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* In witnessing to people about the advantages of receiving Christ, we can add the wonderful promise that, once they become Christians, they can receive the gift of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.



Lesson 7 Teaching Outline



The Baptism with the Holy Spirit

REFERENCE POINT

(10 minutes)

Every Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Christians who have received the fullness of the Holy Spirit have added power to witness (Acts 1:8). To illustrate this point, bring in two identical flashlights one with a new, fully charged battery, the other with a weak battery. Talk with the students about the importance of having a fresh battery to get maximum use from the flashlight. Compare the performance of the weak battery.

Have the students read the *Reference Point*. Allow them to share their questions, making sure you address them as you progress through the lesson.

OVERVIEW

(10 minutes)

Ask a volunteer to read the *Overview* aloud. As they read, write these key phrases on the chalkboard:

- ... the promise is unto you
- ... and to your children
- ... and to all that are afar off
- ... even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Emphasize that those whom God calls includes everyone who has received Jesus as Savior and Lord.

INSIGHT

(20 minutes)

For this lesson the time frame has been adjusted to spend more time on the *Personal Response* section. As you prepare to teach on the Fullness of the Holy Spirit, read through the information on “What the Baptism with the Holy Spirit Is and Is Not.” Also, talk about the initial evidence of speaking in unknown tongues. Be sure to study all the scriptures so you know the subject well. There may be many questions.

TAKING IT HOME

PERSONAL RESPONSE (Conclusion, 20 minutes)

Ask students to work individually on the question asked. As they work, circulate around the room offering suggestions to keep them on track. You will also want to allow some time to discuss the question.

HEART PERSPECTIVE (Personal Devotions)

This section is intended to guide students to receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit themselves. Encourage the members of your class to seek the Lord for this wonderful gift.

FAITH SHARING (Follow-Up)

One of the strong incentives to witnessing is not only that a person can be saved, but also that God has so many other blessing in store for a person once he or she becomes a born again child of God. One of these tremendous benefits is the baptism with the Holy Spirit.